GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:408
ANSWERED ON:22.02.2001
RUNNING OF SAMJHAUTA EXPRESS
ANANTA NAYAK;ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan have renewed the rail agreement to run the Samjhauta Express for another three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the issue which have been taken care of during the agreement;

(c) whether issues of smuggling and militant activities which causes threat to Indian economy have also been discussed before signing the agreement;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Pakistani Government thereto;

(e) the steps being taken by the Government to check the smuggling and militant activities being organized through this train;

(f) whether any steps were proposed to run goods train between the two countries; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Agreement relates to the scope of services between Indian Railways and Pakistan Railways and the technical modalities of running of trains. The new agreement envisages continue running freight and passenger services between India and Pakistan.

(c) This agreement pertains to only technical details of rail operation. It does not deal with the matters related with smuggling and militant activities.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) i) Immigration work at Attari Railway Station and Wagha Checkpost has been taken over by Bureau of Immigration.

ii) In order to eliminate middlemen/go-betweens, the services of coolies at Attari RailwayStation have been dispensed with and trollies provided to the passengers for ferrying their luggage.

iii) Duty Free Allowance of foreign tourists (including Indian and Pakistanis) coming fromPakistan by land route has been reduced to Rs. 3000.

iv) It has been decided to limit the baggage to be carried by passengers of Samjhauta Express tothe permissible free allowance only i.e. 50 Kgs for Class-I passengers and 35 Kgs for Class-Ipassengers to facilitate 100% manual checking of the baggage by the security forces.

v) All the concerned agencies deployed at Attari/Wagha have been advised to strengthen their vigilance mechanism to prevent complicity of their officials in abetting smuggling etc.

(f) & (g) Goods train is already running between the two countries.